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A

SERMON

Preach'd to the

SOCIETIES

FOR

Reformation of *Manners*,

In the CITIES of

London and *Westminster*.

July the 2d, 1705.

By *B. GRAVENER.*

Publish'd at their Request.

The Second Edition.

LONDON,
Printed for *John Lawrence* at the Sign of the *Angel* in the *Poultrey*, 1705.

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By R. GRAYDON.

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SERMON

Preach'd at

Salters-Hall,

IN

LONDON:

July the 2d, 1705.

Prov. XI. 11.

By the Bleſſing of the Upright a City is Exalted: But 'tis Overthrown by the Mouth of the Wicked,

THESE Words may ſerve as a *General Inſcription* to your whole Deſign; a Deſign, that intitles you to the Honour of having God at the

Head of your Society. For 'tis under Him you Act, and *for Him you Riſe up againſt Evil-doers, and Stand up againſt the Workers of Iniquity.* A Deſign, for which Magiſtracy was ordain'd, *Rom.* xiii. 4, 5. and into which the Supreme Authority of this Nation, both in the Former and Preſent Reign, has enter'd with ſo much Concern and Zeal, expreſs'd in ſeveral Acts of Parliament, Addreſſes, and Proclamations, againſt Immorality and Profaneneſs, and in other Royal Intimations of Approbation, Countenance and Favour, *to theſe Societies*; that as there never was ſo Happy a Conjuncture before, ſo the neglect of *This* may draw upon us the Judgment of never being Try'd or Bleſs'd with another.

An Attempt, which the Miniſters of the Goſpel, more eſpecially, are devoted to promote; for one end of the *Grace*, which they are Preachers of, is to *Teach Men to live Soberly and Righteouſly*; which does not therefore ceaſe to be a Part of their Buſineſs and Succeſs, for its being a leſs valuable Part than that other Attainment of *living Godly*

Godly in this present World. We aim indeed at transforming the Nature, and to turn the Wolf into a Lamb: But if they will resist the Charm, *and hate to be Reform'd*, publick Convenience calls for their being Chain'd up and Restrain'd. If we can't prevail with them to Save Themselves, they may be hinder'd from Destroying Others. It's fit to have a Madman's Hands tyed, tho' that falls short of a Restoration. The Magistrate is the Guardian of the Publick Peace and Welfare; and for as much as Publick Ruine *must* be the Effect of General Debauchery, His Laws are to prevent the Spreading of that Infection, which Our Gospel has not Cur'd, that so Sin and Misery may not be Epidemical; that Those who are Resolv'd to be Undone, may be so in as little Company as possible, and may Perish alone, and not Draw after them the *Overthrow of the City.*

AND 'twould be with a very ill Grace, that *We* could abandon you in this Conflict. Wherein the Divine Assistance, Spirit, and Blessing, and the united Prayers of Assembled Christians are so

Neceſſary, That no Pretence ought to be heard againſt the Importance of Setting out with God from time to time, of taking Meaſures, Directions, and Encouragement from Him; Enquiring at His Oracles, and by fetching new Fire from the Altar, Inflaming your Zeal, that when it begins to rebate and cool, it may be quickned *according to his Word, Pſ.* cxix. 25. For us, I ſay, not to *wiſh you Good Speed, and Bleſs you in the Name of the Lord*, would be as Unaccountable to our *Inſtitution and Office*, as it would ha' been Traiterouſly Unkind to *Iſrael*, had *Aaron* on the one Side, or *Hur* on the other, refus'd the Help of Holding up *Moſes*'s *Hands*, when they knew, that if the Hand was not *lifted up* to Heaven, *Amalek* would certainly *Prevail.*

THIS Conſideration ſtruck all my Objections dumb, and They were not a few I could have rais'd againſt my Coming upon this Service at this Time. Ariſing ſo far from any Indifference to the Cauſe, that 'twas an hearty Zeal for it that would have ſtill inclin'd me to refer it to ſome other Hand. But,

as

as in our Duty to God, our Encouragement is, that Where Ability fails, *it is accepted if there be first a Willing Mind*; ſo when I diſcern'd in you the Candour of Accepting an honeſt Endeavour, I reſolv'd not to decline it, tho' I could little more than Demonſtrate the Compleatneſs of what Others have done, or *ſtir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance*: The Remembrance of what you have had in Subſtance often Demonſtrated to you, That *by the Bleſſing of the Upright the City is Exalted, but 'tis Overthrown by the Mouth of the Wicked.*

THIS Book of *Proverbs* is an incomparable Treaſury of Wiſdom and Morals; and tho' 'tis not deliver'd in Form of a Syſtem, is yet a moſt Compleat *Directory* of Management and Conduct, Humane and Divine, Temporal and Spiritual, Political, Family, and Perſonal.

THAT Connexion and Coherence that's obſerv'd in other Parts of Scripture, is rarely to be found here; nor is it indeed needful, where the Deſign is a Miſcellaneous Collection; yet my

Text

Text ſeems to have a Dependance upon its immediate foregoing Context, *V.* 10. *When it goeth well with the Righteous, a City Rejoiceth; but when the Wicked periſh, there is Shouting,* (*i. e.*) When Good Men are Countenanced and Encouraged, Diſtinguiſhed and Promoted, the whole *City Rejoiceth* in the Expectation of the Equity, Juſtice, and all the Bleſſed Fruits of their Righteous Adminiſtration. But the Promotion of Evil Men, is but empowering them to be, what they always would be, but for Legal Reſtraints, *viz. a Protection to Evil-doers, and a Terror to them that do well*; and the Miſeries following upon that Inverſion of things, accounts for the Harſhneſs of what follows, that *when the Wicked Periſh there is Shouting*: Becauſe of the Juſt Judgment of God upon *Them*, who have been Inſtruments of ſo much Miſchef; becauſe of the Deliverance from the Grievance and Burden of *Powerful Wickedneſs*: As when *Nero* died, the People of *Rome* broke out into exceſſive Joy, and Congratulated each other, as upon Deliverance from a Waſting Plague, or Devouring

vouring Monſter: And then a third Reaſon is given in my Text, Becauſe *by the Bleſſing of the Upright a City is Exalted, but 'tis Overthrown by the Mouth of the Wicked.*

THE Oppoſition in the Text is Exactly the ſame with *That* in the World, between the two great Parties of the *Upright* and the *Wicked*. And as the Words are a Summary Account of your Preſent Deſign, ſo they do in ſhort forewarn us, into what the Controverſie will infallibly Iſſue on either Side, *viz.* the *Exaltation* or *Overthrow of the City*: The *Exalting* this City to a Nobler pitch of Order, Regularity, and conſequently of Grandeur, than ever it has yet attain'd: Or its entire *Overthrow*, in its Laws, Conſtitution, Peace, Order, and Proſperity; not only as the Judicial Conſequence of a Divine Blaſt and Curſe from a Provoked God, but as the Natural Effect of Growing Profaneneſs, and Unreſtrained Luſt and Appetite, and a *Connivance* at Plain and Uncontеſted Impiety; *Which*, next to the Practice of it, is the worſt thing that can be charged upon a Community,

and

and is to all Ruining and Deſtructive Purpoſes, much the ſame as if *Iniquity were Eſtabliſh'd by a Law.* And this I take to be the Subſtance and Meaning of the Text, which may be ſhortned into this Obſervation, as the Ground of what follows.

OBS. *The Attempt for Reformation, is a Struggle between the two great Parties of* Upright *and* Wicked, *carry'd on by the Bleſſing of the One againſt the Profane Mouth of the Other; and according to the Reſpective Tendency of either Side, will Iſſue in the* Exaltation *of a City, or its* Overthrow *and Ruin.*

TO Anſwer the Obſervation, and the Preſent Occaſion, we ſhould here Conſider,

I. *THE Perſons or Parties mention'd, Upright and Wicked; and ſtate their Proper Character and Notion.*

II. *THE Conſequent Neceſſary Oppoſition of the Bleſſing of the Righteous againſt the Mouth of the Wicked.*

III. *THE*

III. *THE Oppoſite Influence that the Prevailing Side has upon Civil Society*; EXALTATION *by the Bleſſing of the Righteous*, *or* OVERTHROW *by the Mouth of the Wicked.*

IV. *THE Uſe of all, and Special Accommodation of this Truth to our preſent Purpoſe.*

I. *THE Perſons or Parties mentioned Upright and Wicked.*

THE proper Notion and Character of theſe Perſons, is a Matter of the higheſt Importance; and therefore the Scripture uſes ſuch Fullneſs and Variety of Explication, that we may not miſtake the *Roll* upon which we ſtand. In the General, it is the ſame with Holy, Righteous, Good, *&c.* But in the Preciſe Notion of this Rendring *Upright*, it denotes, Toward God and Heaven, an inflexible and ſteddy Aim, and a Mind that cannot ſtand Bent in Compliance to *Sin* and *this World*, but aſpires to Perfection in a *Better*; and the Diſtinguiſhing Properties of Such, Compoſe a moſt Lovely Character. ——

THEIR

THEIR Underſtandings are *Light in the Lord.* Their Conſciences Tender. Sin is their Averſion and Fear. * And notwithſtanding the too many *Blemiſhes* of Surprize and Infirmity, Purity is the General Complexion of their Souls, and that which they always Endeavour to carry off ſafe, tho' it be thro' Wracks and Torments, and Death it ſelf †. Their *Will* is laid at the Feet of God; their *Affections ſet on things above*, and on their *Beloved Jeſus*, with an Inſeparable Embrace; in them He Reigns without any allowed Rival; Faith, Love, and Duty, is their Principle, the Word is their Rule. As for *this World*, if given In, 'tis their Wellcome Servant; if not, *as having Nothing, yet poſſeſſing All things*; for God is their *choſen Portion.* And their Life is to do all the Good they can in this World, and make Sure of

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* Pſ. 97. 10. *You that Fear the Lord, Hate Evil.*

† 'Twas bravely Anſwer'd by a Sufferer to the Threats of his Perſecutors, *Look you, you may do what you pleaſe, but I muſt do what I ought.*

——— So *Chryſoſtom*, in anſwer to the Threatning Meſſage of *Eudoxia*, the Empreſs, *Tell Her* (ſays he) *that I fear nothing but Sin.*

of a better. And *this*, with a few *Abatements* to Frailty and Temptation, is their Character. And is it not a Lovely one? Does it not promiſe as much as the Text aſcribes to it, *viz*, the *Exaltation of that City* where they abound? A City of theſe would be like the *New Jeruſalem*, would Anticipate the Bleſſedneſs of the *General Aſſembly*, and give a Taſt of the Joys of Heaven upon Earth.

NOW the Character of the Wicked is the *Reverſe* of all this: *They are Alienated from the Life, Law, and Nature of God, through the Darkneſs of their Minds and the Hardneſs of their Hearts.* Conſcience in them is an *Office ſhut up*; their Will and Humour is their Lord, Cuſtom and Inclination their Rule; their Senſes the only meaſure of Good, and their Intereſt of Right and Wrong; To contradict Either of which, is with Them as great Nonſenſe, as to deny firſt Principles. For the *other World* is thrown out of their *Scheme*, and the *preſent* is their choſen Portion. And for want of *Principle*, They Sin on without knowing any *Reaſon* of doing

Other-

Otherwiſe. By this means Sin has the full Conſent of their Will, and their Inclinations *ſtand Bent* to their Luſts, while *they ſay unto God, Depart from us.* Thus they Reſemble in Temper, and Imitate in Practice, Their Father the Devil, *And the Works of their Father they will do.* And they that will Sacrifice their own Souls to their Senſual *Gratification*, will never value what *other Miſchief* they do to come at *it*: Tho' it ſhould be *the Overthrow of Cities.*

II. *THE Conſequent Neceſſary Oppoſition of theſe Upright and Wicked, Expreſs'd here by the Bleſſing of the One againſt the Mouth of the Other.*

LIGHT and Darkneſs, Bleſſing and Curſing, Salvation and Deſtruction, are not more Oppoſite than theſe Characters, in their Nature, Tendency, and Influence. Sin, in its own Nature, is all Contradiction and Enmity. When there was but One Man in the World, it ſet him at Variance with Himſelf, his God, and his Happineſs: And in the firſt Brothers we read of, it excited a Quarrel, that ended in the Murder of

the

the *Upright One*; And for no other Reason assigned by Scripture, than *because his Brother's Works were Righteous*, 1 *Joh.* iii. 12. So that the first Man that Died after Death came into the World, Died in This very Cause, And the Apostle's Inference from it, is the very Head I am upon, and the Use I would make, *Ver.* 12. *Marvel not my Brethren that the World hate You*, Your Persons, your Design, and your Conduct; for *from the Blood of Righteous Abel*, down to the Blood of that Zealous Reforming Officer, * Mr. *Cooper*, all the Blood that has been shed on God's Side, has been owing to this Opposition.

NOW this *Opposition* is carry'd on with this Remarkable Difference, That whereas the Wicked *Hate* the very Persons of the Righteous *with a cruel Hatred*, Psal. xxv. 19. the Righteous Enmity lies only against *Their* Wickedness. Our Hostility is only to Their Vices, which is indeed the truest Friendship to their Persons. We aim at the Destruction

* A Constable Kill'd at *May-Fair* by the Rioters that Oppos'd the Reformers.

of nothing but their Sins, Which will prove the Salvation of their Souls. *The Blood-thirsty Man hateth the Upright, but the Just seeketh his Soul, Prov.* xxix. 10. This is *doing good to them that hate you* indeed. So Christ shed his Blood to save His very Murderers, and pray'd for them at the time it was Running. So *Paul* wish'd himself an *Anathema*, (i. e.) devoted to any Dangers, Penalties, and Deaths, for the *Good* even of those who *had given Him three times forty Stripes save one* *. So the Blessed Martyr, *Sanders*, when committed to Prison by Bishop *Gardner*, *Thanked God for a Place where he might have a Little Rest, and Leisure to Pray for the Conversion of the Bishop* †. So the *Upright in my Text* Oppose their *Blessing* to the *Mouth of the Wicked*: Their Good Words, Good Wishes, Good Actions, Prayers and Endeavours, against the Mouth, (i. e.) against their Daring Impudence, express'd here by the chief Seat of it. And against their Foul and Profane Language,

* Compare *Rom.* 9. 3. with 2 *Cor.* 11. 24.

† Acts and Mon. Vol. 3. p. 110.

guage, expreſs'd by the *Inſtrument* of it, and by an *Hebraiſm*, The *Mouth* here ſtands for the Action, Converſation, and Diſtinguiſhing Property and Character of the Wicked. For there is no Word which the Idiom of that Language does more indulge in a Latitude of Application and Variety of Figure *.

BUT to be a little Particular.

1. *THE Bleſſing of the Upright lies Partly in the Influence of their Excellent Example and Converſation.*

HENCE called the *Lights of the World*, *Salt of the Earth*, the *Epiſtles of Chriſt known and read of all Men*, *Read* and *Remarked* by thoſe who will not Read the Bible, Whoſe Example is a *Living Law*, a Sermon *to the Eye*, that very often enters Conviction deeper than Argument is ſuffered to reach, and Triumphs over thoſe Minds that can almoſt *Wrangle away* the force of *Demonſtration* it ſelf. It Operates by a Mixture of Authority and Attraction, As it Commands Reverence, and Draws Eſteem, and like a Perfume, Diffuſes its In-

* *Hæc vox valde Pauli Hebraiſmus.* Flac. Illyr.

Influence ſo, as to gain Poſſeſſion before you diſcern its Approach; And thereby Inſenſibly Surpriſes, into Imitation and Acknowledgment, *Thoſe*, who were above being Taught any other way. This is the *Bleſſing of the Upright*; and would to God this *Bleſſing* was of Equal Extent with that *Denomination*.

THE Example and Converſation of the Wicked has a quite Oppoſite Influence. Their Rotten Speech * is Offenſive as the Stench of an *Open Sepulchre*; and not only ſo, but Deſtructive too. It Infects like a Plague: For as in *This* Men Breath Deſtruction upon one another in Salutations; ſo in *That* the † Poet and the Apoſtle agree, that *Evil Communications corrupt good Manners*. As if the Holy Ghoſt had deſigned ſo needful a Caution ſhould ſtand charged upon us by the Experience of Men, and Inſpiration of God. So needful, I ſay, for what can be the Effect of a Corruption of Manners, but that in the Text, *the Overthrow of the City*?

DO

* Σαπρὸς λόγ Θ, Eph. 4. 29.
† *Menander*, quoted by the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 15. 33.

DO not their Oaths *make the Land mourn*, and their Imprecations *wear* the Divine Patience, and *wound* our Souls? The Omnipotence they Play withal is our Dread, and their *Damnation Slumbers not*, tho' it be Part of their Diversion.

DOES not Perjury, which is *Robbing or Murdering* with the *Mouth*, Dissolve the Common Bond of Civil Society, and at once Strike at the Foundation of Religion, as 'tis an Appeal to God turned into a Defiance; and of Government too, as the Conscience of an Oath is the only way of *Ending* otherwise *Endless Strifes?* And as 'tis impossible to take fast hold of that Person, who is loose from the Obligation of Conscience and Truth?

DOES not Flattery Undermine, Swell and Deceive, and by raising the Price of a Man to himself, lessen it to others, and thereby Sow the Seeds of Endless Discord?

HOW does Lying Destroy Common Credit, which is the Hinge upon which all Commerce and Conversation turns?

HOW does Profane and Wanton Speech Sink in upon an Unguarded Spirit, and Kindle upon a Mind that is like Tinder to the Spark? Or, to use *Solomon*'s Similitude, like *an Arrow shot thro the Liver*? Especially when 'tis *Feathered and Pointed* with Wit and Fancy, and all that Force, wherewith the God of this World seldom fails of Inspiring the Poet, and Discharged in a manner as shall do most Execution, as at those Places, where Lewdness is the *Trade* of Some, and the Sport of Others: And where the Theory and Practice of it goes hand in hand, and Relieves each Other, under the Pretence of Entertainment and Diversion. The Play-Houses, I mean, which the Wisest Part of the World have always looked upon as Batteries, Erected to help *Overthrow a City by the Mouth of the Wicked*. A Sort of Artillery that may be depended on, and seldom fails of doing Execution, and has sometimes saved the Expence and Trouble of Armies: As when a certain King of *Assyria* chose rather to Overcome the City of *Babylon*, by sending in Players and Lewd Women to Debauch

it,

it, (by which means he Effectually did it, and gained his End) than to Invade it with a Powerful Army *. This our Forefathers were ſo ſenſible of, that the whole City Joined in a Petition to Queen *Elizabeth*, upon which they were Expelled the City, and their Houſes Suppreſſed †. May that which was ſo happily begun by *One Queen*, be finiſhed by *Another*, to whom we hope this Glory is reſerv'd, of *Stopping the Mouth of the Wicked*, and of *Triumphing over Vice and Diviſion at Home, as well as over Her Enemies Abroad.*

2. THE *Bleſſing of their Advice, Wiſdom and Counſel; Bleſſed is that City or Nation*, for it holds in Proportion as well as *that Man that walketh not in the Counſel of the Ungodly*, Pſ. i. 1.

THE *Councils* of the Wicked uſually drive and *are driven Headlong* like thoſe of *Rehoboam's* Young Men, that Grew up with Him, of adding *Weight* to the *Yoke*, *Scorpions* to the *Whips*, and making the *Little Finger heavier than the*

* Account of the Societies for Reformation, *p.* 100.
† About the Year 1580.

Loins, 1 Kings xii. 10, 11. But we may say here as God to the Prophet, *Ezek.* xi. 2. *Son of Man, these are they which devise Mischef, and give wicked Counsel in this City.* Solomon has comprised, in One *Proverb*, all I need farther add upon this, *Prov.* xii. 10. *Deceit is in the Heart of them that Imagine Evil, but to the Counsellors of Peace is Joy.*

3. *THE Blessings that for the sake of the Upright are very often Conferred upon a City, against the Judgments that are drawn down by the Wicked.*

HOW often has God given his Presence and Protection, and a Lengthning out of Tranquility, for their sakes? Had there been so Small a *Society for Reformation as Ten in Sodom*, it had been Spared. *Pharoah's* Family Prospered for the Sake of *Joseph*, Who, under God, was Acknowledged by all *Egypt* as the Common Saviour. So the whole Ship's Crew had Perished, but for *Paul*. And for the Sake of a few of God's People in *Corinth*, that City had the Enjoyment of the Greatest Blessing in the World continued to them, *Acts* xviii. 10, 11.

10, 11. Nay, God has Honoured the Memory of a Departed Saint with Saving a City for his Sake. *Is.* xxxvii. 35, *I will save this City to defend it for my Servant David's Sake*; *A Noble* Monument *indeed to the Memory of David*, and of the Favour of God to Him, and *of the Blessing of the Righteous.*

BUT on the contrary, to tell how many Judgments the Unbridled *Mouth of the Wicked* has brought upon a People, I must Transcribe a great Part of Sacred and Civil History, which would give such abundant Evidence of Sin and Sinners being the *Achans* that trouble *Israel*, as could not fail of making a due Impression, were we not fallen into those Times, *wherein if the Son of Man should come, he would hardly find Faith upon the Earth.*

4. *THE Blessing that the Upright obtain by Prayer.* Scripture speaks of the Power of Prayer in such Terms as raises a Dispute between the *Faith* and *Modesty* of a Christian. *That the Effectual Fervent Prayer of the Righteous Man availeth much*, They dare not but believe; and yet that *They* should have such

ſuch an Intereſt with God, is a Privilege that nothing but Faith could ever perſuade their Humility to own. *My Servant Job ſhall Pray for You, I will accept Him, Job* xlii. 8. How Great does that look upon *Job?* It's ſaid to *Open* and *Shut Heaven*, to have the Power of Life and Death, *Gen.* xx. 7. *Jam.* v. 15. To *Stand in the Gap*, and Stop the Entrance of Vengeance at thoſe Breaches that Sin has made, with abundance more of Expreſſions, Promiſes, and Inſtances, which as they Recommend and Magnify this *Bleſſing of the Righteous*, ſo they Demonſtrate, what Deſtruction and *Overthrow* there is in Sin, that the Interceſſion of the moſt beloved Favorites, Men who never uſed to be denied, whoſe Prayers have been anſwered to a Miracle, and have ſometimes Stopt the Mouths of Lions, Unlockt the Secrets of Futurity, as *Daniel's*; Saved their Families from Univerſal Ruines, as *Noah*; and gain'd Audience, when no body elſe could have been heard, as *Job*. Yet even *Theſe Men* could not have been able to Save a People. *Ezek.* xiv. *Tho' Daniel, Noah,*

and

and Job, ſhould Stand before me, they ſhould not Deliver, Son nor Daughter, but only their own Souls. From whence 'tis a Plain Obſervation, that the Beſt and moſt Solemn Prayers for Publick Bleſſings, are in vain, while no Care is taken to Suppreſs thoſe Publick Enormities, which muſt needs Overthrow our City, becauſe they can Overthrow even our Prayers themſelves.

5. *THE Bleſſing of that Publick Spiritedneſs, whereby they are led to Aim at General Good* *, *which the Wicked never ſcruple to Sacrifice to their own Particular Intereſt. I will ſeek thy Good, O Jeruſalem, Pſ.* cxxii. 9. is the Language of the One: *Who will ſhow Us any Good, Pſ.* iv. the Selfiſh Cry of the Other.

THIS was the Noble Character of *Nehemiah* and *Mordecai*, that they *Sought the Good of the Land*, Neh. xi. 10.

SUCH Believe they are not born for Themſelves, *Eſth.* x. 3. but that God has a Right to all the Glory, and the Com-

* *Benedictione* (i. e.) *Benedicti & Beneficii Eorum. Merc. in loc.*

Community to all the Benefit they can poſſibly bring. While the Wicked Man regards not the Rights of Either, But Centers entirely in Himſelf, is his own Idol, and at Bottom owns no other Deity. It's Part of the Character, as well as Reaſon, of Thoſe *Perilous Times*, 2 Tim. iii. 3. *That Men ſhall be Lovers of Themſelves*, and value not what becomes of the Publick Veſſel, ſo they may but Adorn or Furniſh their own Cabin.

6. *THE Bleſſing of a Conſcientious Endeavour to Propagate Religion and Holineſs, and to Suppreſs and Prevent Sin.*

IT's a vaſt Bleſſing to a City, that the Upright think Themſelves under the Obligation of ſuch a Text as that, *Lev.* xix. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thine Heart: Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Brother, and not ſuffer Sin to be upon him.* And dare not put off God and Man with *Cain*'s Evaſion, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?*

THEIR Godlike Nature cannot behold the Great God Employing his Infinite Perfections for the Benefit and

Happi-

Happineſs of Mankind, without Imitation and Gratitude. And beſides, their being in their Baptiſmal Dedication Devoted to the Service of the Intereſt of Chriſt, the Holineſs of their Nature, like that of God, aims at a Propagation and Diffuſion of it ſelf in the World, and like Fire, to which the Author, that New Nature, is compar'd, is for Converting every thing it can Kindle upon into its own Nature: And with St. *Paul*, wiſhes the World *were altogether ſuch as they are, except their Infirmities*, Acts xxvi. 29.

THE Wicked, on the contrary, ſtudy to Propagate Sin, for Reaſons too evident, and in Inſtances dolefully numerous. Number and Cuſtom gives Countenance to Vice, and makes their own Enormities leſs Pointed at; for a Monſter ceaſes to be thought ſo among its own Kind. 'Tis for this Reaſon they endeavour to make all about 'em either really or reputedly as Bad as themſelves. If their Father the Devil goes about *Seeking whom he may Devour*, the Children are no leſs diligently employed in the ſame way. Pſ. lx. 73. *They ſet their Mouths*

Mouths against Heaven, and their Tongue walketh through the Earth, in Defiance to God and Man. And as the Diligence is the same, so is the End, *viz Destruction* and *Mischief*, as would appear in the opposite Influence and Tendency of these two Characters upon Civil Society, which is the Third thing Proposed, and comes next to be Considered.

III. *THE Opposite Influence these Characters and Practices have to the Exaltation or Overthrow of the City.*

§. I. *AS to Governors.*

BY the Blessing of Upright Governors a City is Exalted. Righteousness Inspires them with Noble and Generous Designs, for the Good of the Community over which they Preside; and by Teaching the Highest to remember there is an *Higher than they*, before whose Impartial Bar they must stand upon a Level with the Meanest. Deters and Awes from all Oppression, Tyranny, and abuse of Power, and Impresses deeply that needful Lesson, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 3. *They that Rule over Men, must be Just, Ruling in the fear of the Lord.*

BUT

BUT Principle and Duty does not do all here, 'tis the Inclination and Pleasure of such to be Universal Blessings, and, like Him they Represent, to *do Good unto all*; Accounting it their Glory to represent the Goodness, Holiness and Justice of the Almighty, as well as Majesty and Power. This makes them tender of their Subjects Welfare as of their own, and is a Security to the People, even where Laws and Constitutions are Ineffectual. In such a City no *Ahabs* are longing for the Neighbouring Vineyard, no *Jezabels* procuring False Witness to Swear the Owner out of Life, no Interests separate from the Publick Welfare, advanc'd upon its Ruins, but the People Esteem'd as the Children of the Family, and *Kings and Queens their Nursing-Fathers and Nursing-Mothers*.

AND as *Righteousness Exalts the City*, so it *Establishes the Throne*, Prov. xvi. 12. For nothing makes a Crown sit Faster, or shine Brighter, nor Majesty to look more like what it is, *the Ordinance of God*. This makes their Persons not only Rever'd, but Admir'd, their

Memory

Memory Precious, their Future Accounts Joyful, and all Posterity to call them Blessed.

AS farther appears, if we consider,

§. II. *THE Influence of it upon the People, and those Governed.* As,

1. *IT secures Obedience from the most lasting Principle, that of Conscience, Duty, and Integrity.* Rom. xiii. 5. *Not only for Fear, but for Conscience sake.* And that very Conscience which no Threats can deter from *Obeying God rather than Man*, is thereby Security for the firmest Loyalty, and the most universal *Civil Obedience*, where there is no such Competition. In the case of *Reformation*, *God's* Commands and *Her Majesty's* are the same. So that a Man can't be *Irreligious* without being *Disloyal*. And this shows of how little Worth, and how little Lasting those Principles are like to be, from which Men Obey in *Other* Instances, when in *This* they can break through the double Sanction of *Loyalty* and *Religion*, and fly in the Face of *God* and the *Queen* at the same time. In a word, None so chearfully Ready to *Give to Cæsar the*

things

Things that are His, in Willing Taxes, Earneſt Prayers, and Hearty Service, as thoſe, who Conſcientiouſly regard the *doing ſo*, as one Inſtance of *rendring to God the Things that are His.*

2. *AS it Promotes Peace and Quietneſs among a People.*

DOES not Righteouſneſs Cloath with Humility, and Meekneſs Smooth the Temper, and Qualify its Roughneſs? Inforce the Duties, and Infuſe the Amiable Qualities of Charity, Condeſcenſion, and Forbearance? Is not that Love to our Fellow Chriſtians, without which the Apoſtle concludes a Man deſtitute of Chriſtianity, a Mutual Cement? Does not Contentedneſs in our Station, another Dictate of Righteouſneſs, abundantly contribute to the Publick Tranquillity? Compare Self-denial, Temperance, Gentleneſs, with the reſt of the Properties of the *Wiſdom from above*; With Unruly Affections, Obſtinacy, Revenge, Exceſs, and Luſt, and what does the one naturally Promiſe, and the other Threaten? Are not the former the Seeds of Peace, the beſt Means and ſureſt

Preſervative of Quietneſs? *Righteouſneſs and Peace Kiſs each other.* And as the People are called Waters, this Smooths the Face of thoſe Waters, which would otherwiſe be Boiſterous. Spreads a general Harmony, mutual Endearment and Confidence; whereas the latter does as naturally lead to *Hobs*'s Imaginary State of Nature, (*i. e.*) a State of War, Enmity, and Confuſion, and makes Men *Lions and Tygers to one another*, Iſ. xi. 6.

3. *AS it Promotes the Trade, and Advances the Wealth of a City.*

NOT only as it Secures *the Bleſſing of the Lord which makes Rich*, (a Bleſſing which upon Obedience God has promiſed to a Nation *ſhall enter their Basket and Store*, Deut. xxviii. 5.) But as the ſeveral Parts of Righteouſneſs have Proſperity in their Natural Conſequence. Juſtice, Diligence, Frugality, and Temperance, ſeldom fail to juſtify this Obſervation; and whenever they ſeem to fail, the true Reaſon, I doubt not, if known to us, as it is to God, would rather confirm this Truth; unleſs in ſome caſes, wherein God for

wiſe

wiſe Ends, puts things a little beſide the Common and Ordinary Track: For according to *This*, Sin and Suffering are inſeparable. Does not the Covetous bury his Talents, and thereby Stagnate the Publick Blood? Does not Idleneſs ſpread a Ruſt over the Mind, and Clog the Vigour of the Spirit, and turn an active, uſeful Perſon, into a lump of Clay, and covers the Field with a Crop of Nettles? Does not Extravagance as Really undoe a Man, as Fire and Sword, tho' in a manner more pleaſing, and by ſlower degrees? But inſtead of Demonſtrating this through the whole Circle of Vices, let it be Once more obſerv'd to you, *That the Greateſt Empires and moſt Flouriſhing Nations have Riſen and Fallen with their Virtue; and their Deſtruction and Depravation are Dated together.*

4. *THIS of Neceſſary Conſequence Exalts the Honour of a City.* For ſo the *Exalting a Nation*, as immediately Oppoſed to that Reproach and Diſgrace *which Sin is to any People*, is aſcribed to it, *Prov.* xiv. 34. But this Part of

the Subject has already pass'd through * Better Hands; and therefore I shall drop the Prosecution of it, to make room for the Application.

IV. *THE Application of this Subject shall lie in the following Inferences.*

1. *To Oppose the Progress of Sin, to stop the Mouth of the Wicked, must needs be the proper Business of a Christian Magistrate.*

NAY, it most certainly belongs to His Office as a *Magistrate*, if we should lay aside his Duty as a *Christian:* For to prevent Publick *Overthrow*, is a Dictate of Common Sence and Nature. The Heathen World, without the Illumination of Christianity, very well knew, that the Overthrow of Cities would follow a Dissoluteness of Manners, and had Recourse to this Institution as a Remedy. So that to Promote a Reformation of Manners, and Encourage all that Regularly Attempt it, because the *Overthrow* or *Exaltation of the City* is concern'd, is the very Reason of

* Archbishop *Tillotson*'s Sermon, *Prov.* 14. 37. Dr. *Haley*'s Reformation Sermon.

of their Inſtitution. The Publick Peace and Welfare is a Truſt committed to Them, Which they Betray, and therein are falſe to their Oaths, Conſciences, and Souls, by Slighty Neglect, or Cold Indifference here, which would be as Flagitious, as to ſtand by and ſilently look upon a Perſon Firing the City; for Fire is but one way of *Overthrow*, the *Mouth of the Wicked* is another. The Guilt of Connivance is the ſame, tho' the Ways of Deſtruction are different. But now to Diſcourage Thoſe any ways who Endeavour to Extinguiſh the Flame, to Prevent our Overthrow, is a Wickedneſs, to which *Nero*'s Singing over Burning *Rome* is no more to be compar'd, than Temporal Calamity to Eternal Deſtruction; and an Iniquity of that nature, that the Words are yet to be found out that can poſſibly deſcribe it.

BUT When I ſay a *Chriſtian* Magiſtrate, How much greater is the Obligation? How much more powerful the Motive, more excellent the Rule, and more noble the End, more glorious the reward, and conſequently more Dili-

gent and in Earneſt ſhould be the Endeavours of a Reformation? This muſt needs be Effect of a careful Regard of God's Honour and Authority, without which the *Name* of Chriſtian is an Uſurpation, For the *Thing* is a Deſign *to Deſtroy the Works of the Devil*, and utterly inconſiſtent with doing *thoſe Works, or taking pleaſure in them that do them.*

MAGISTRATES in this reſpect, are the *Pillars of the Earth*, Pſ. lv. 3. *I bear up the Pillars of the Earth.* But how? *Ver.* 2. *By Judging Uprightly.* So that when Upright Judgment is taken away, the Pillars are Removed, and the *City Overthrown of courſe.* A Righteous Magiſtrate knows himſelf appointed to this very End, *To be a Terror to Evil-doers, and a Praiſe to them that do well:* And it's no Queſtion ſure with any but the Criminals, whether Executing the Laws of the Land, that are the ſame with thoſe of God, be doing Well, or no? A Magiſtrate can do a great deal with his very Eyes, to *Scatter away Evil*, *Prov.* xx. 28. Or to Diſcourage the Righteous: And by the Air

of

of his Countenance, can either Hearten or Deaden this Work, make it Eaſie or Troubleſome, in all the Parts of Information and Proſecution.

THEY are the Maſter-Spring of the whole, according to which all the other Movements are either Brisk or Languid: It muſt *Die* or *Live* in their Hands, and they muſt be anſwerable for the Conſequences. *They are appointed to attend continually upon this very thing*, *Rom.* xiii. 6. And therefore 'tis not a Buſineſs *by the by*, nor a Matter of Condeſcenſion, or Courteſie, but the Chief Reaſon of their Inſtitution.

BUT if They fail us, which God forbid; If when Offenders are brought before them, they ſhould, like *Gallio*, *Care for none of theſe things*; If they ſhould drive away the Righteous with their Eyes, and encourage the Wicked in their Abominations, who need no more to make 'em Rampant, than Connivance and Impunity; If they ſhould ſtudy to make all the Steps of Reformation, heavy, difficult, and tireſome: Our Watchmen would betray us; and they that keep the Gates, let in the E-

nemy. We *ſhould look in the place of Righteouſneſs and behold a Cry, and in the place of Juſtice and behold Iniquity; they would riſe up for Evil-doers againſt God, and join with the Mouth of the Wicked to Overthrow the City: And if the Foundations be thus Deſtroy'd, what can the Righteous do?*

2. *IT's not only Inhumane and Ungodly, but it's Impolitick and Ruinous to Civil Intereſt, for any Government to Perſecute the Upright, whoſe Bleſſing is ſuch an Exaltation to a City, and a Preſervative againſt its Overthrow.*

COME let us Root 'em out of the Earth, ſays the Mouth of the Wicked. And ſuppoſe it Effected, all they Would Gain thereby, would be to Break down the Banks between them and Deſtruction; to Cut down the Branch upon which they Stand, and the Diſmantling their own Garriſon. The Covenant of Grace is a *League* Offenſive and Defenſive, into which God has entred with His People; and therefore whoſoever falls upon *Them, Touches the Apple of his Eye*, Awakens his Jealouſie, Challenges the Omnipotent Arm, and Draws upon

upon them the Vengeance of Their Powerful Ally; which will overtake them never the leſs *Sure*, becauſe It is ſometimes *Slow*.

IT's certain, This way of *Overthrowing* muſt always proceed *from the Mouth of the Wicked*. For the Beſt of Governments have all along been of the Mind, *That as nothing is more contrary to the Profeſſion of Chriſtian Religion, and Particularly to the Doctrine of all Proteſtant Churches, than Perſecution for Conſcience ſake only*; *So 'tis as Impolitick* as 'tis *Unchriſtian*, as contrary to the *Real Intereſt* of the Kingdom, as 'tis to the *Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion*, Not only as it Provokes God to return in Judgment the *Violent Dealings of Men upon their own Head*; but alſo, becauſe Nothing in the World does ſo naturally make Places Deſolate and Abandon'd, as Violence and Perſecution: Whereas on the other Hand, Nothing gives ſuch a Vigorous Complexion to the Body Politick, Nothing ſo much Heartens Trade, Encourages Induſtry, which together with Mutual Confidence, are the Spirits and Vitals of a Kingdom, as to know

that

that They are not Labouring for the Spoilers.

AND to this purpoſe I ſhall only add the Remark of an Eminent * Traveller, That notwithſtanding *France* and *Italy* are Incomparably more Rich, and better Furniſh'd with all the Pleaſures and Conveniencies of Life, than *Switſerland*, that lies between both; yet the laſt is much better Peopled; and has every where, all the Marks that can be look'd for of Plenty and Wealth; while the two former are in a manner Diſpeopled, and Reduced to that Miſery and Poverty, that appears in all the Marks in which it can ſhew it ſelf. Such is the Tendency of Living at Eaſe under a Gentle Government to the *Exaltation of a City*, and of Tyranny and Oppreſſion to its *Overthrow*. *For People will Feel Right, Though in General Ideas of Government, they may Argue Falſe.*

3. *THIS*

* Dr. *Burnet's* Letters. *Let.* 1.

3. *THIS Answers the Objection against the Proceedings of your Society, as being too much ado about Small Matters.*

AND what Hurt does it do me, says one, that Another is Drunk, or Swears, or Breaks the Sabbath? I doubt not but they that Talk thus, are of the same Mind with Pope *Julius* the Third, Who thought an Apple a Small matter that God should be so Angry with *Adam* for; as if the Sin were to be measured by the Value of the *Matter*, rather than the Malignity of *Spirit*, *the Authority Affronted*, or the Judicial and Natural *Consequences* of the Disobedience.

BUT is it a small thing to have the Laws of God and Man to be made a *Jest* of by Offenders, or a *Dead Letter* by Neglect of Execution? And by a Course of Provocation Publickly indulged, to have it become Publick Guilt, and charged to a Common Account? And so at length to have God's Name concerned to Ruine us, in Vindication of its own Honour, upon Tolerated Blasphemy and Swearing? To have

have the Religion of *ſerious Oaths* Periſh entirely through an Accuſtomedneſs to Thoſe that are *Profane?* To have the Lord's Day obſerved only as a *Feſtival to the Devil*, a Dedication to *Vanity*, *Idleneſs*, or *Mammon?* To have Luxury, Idleneſs and Intemperance, ſtock the Nation with Beggars, Theivery and Fraud, and Men ſuffered to proceed from one Degree of Wickedneſs to another, till thoſe who have been let alone to fly in the Face of God, will know no Reaſon of ſparing to fly in yours? For Sin is an Endleſs Circle of Miſchiefs Here, as it will be of Puniſhment Hereafter.

4. *THIS ſhows who ought to be accounted the Beſt Friends to a City or Nation; The Upright, whoſe Bleſſing Exalts a City or Nation; Or the Wicked, whoſe Profane Mouth, whether they think it or no, tends to its Overthrow.*

THOSE who will Sacrifice the Publick to their Private Satisfaction, or thoſe who *Prefer Jeruſalem to their Chief Joy:* Thoſe who are for ſetting us one againſt another by their Heats, and God againſt us all by Their Sin;

or

or thoſe who are for *Following Peace with all Men and Holineſs:* Thoſe who Mourn for the Sins of the Land, and continually Pray to God to Divert Impending Judgments; or thoſe who Provoke the Wrath of God, and ſeem to Challenge Him by their Imprecations to do His Worſt: And rather than Croſs a Luſt, or Deny a Paltry Appetite, will Sink a Navy, Betray an Army, and *Overthrow a Government.* For ſuch is the tendency of their Provocation.

I T's true, Some very Ill Men may upon Political Principles, be Friends to a Particular Conſtitution of Government: But a Wicked Man, by his Provoking Practice, Helps to Fruſtrate his beſt Deſigns, and to Overthrow that with his Mouth which he is for Eſtabliſhing in his Judgment. For the Purpoſe, Thoſe that Swear and Drink for a Cauſe, do thereby Blaſt and Ruin the Intereſt they Eſpouſe. He that Hates Reformation in Himſelf and Others, is ſo far a Dangerous Enemy to the Kingdom, if there be any Truth in that Text, *Pſ.* cvii.34. *A Fruitful Land is turned into Barrenneſs for the Wickedneſs of them that Dwell therein,* any Political Security notwithſtanding.

5. *THE*

5. *THE Upright will make Conſcience of Contributing their Bleſſing toward this Exaltation of the City, and Preventing its Overthrow by the Mouth of the Wicked.*

YOU can't be Indifferent in this Matter: You cannot be Neuter in this Warfare. You Muſt chooſe your Side: God Calls you to it, ſaying, *Who is on my Side who?* Exod. xxxii. 20. Pſalm lxxxxiv. 16.

YOU ſay, You Wiſh well to the Reformation, and Deſire and Pray for its Succeſs. You do Well. And if you can do no more, it will be *Accepted according to what a Man Hath, and not according to what a Man Hath not.* But if it be in the Power of thine Hands to do more than Wiſh and Pray, Don't think that *God Bleſs the Reformation* will be reckon'd as the Bleſſing of the Upright in my Text; no more than *Be ye Fed, and be ye Cloathed,* will Paſs for Charity from an Able Perſon: Or *Lord have Mercy upon us* at a Dying Hour, Waft an Impenitent Soul ſheer out of all Danger. *Be not Deceived,* ſays the Apoſtle, *as a Man Sows, ſo*

ſhall

ſhall he Reap: If a Man *Sows* nothing but *Words*, what can he *Reap* but *Wind?*

WELL, but you do Pray Heartily for the Progreſs of the Reformation. Let me Ask you, Can I Pray Heartily for *What* I am not Heartily Concern'd for? And, Can I be Heartily Concern'd for *That* I will be at no Coſt upon, But think too dearly Promoted at the Expence of a Trifle, which I can ſo eaſily *Bear*, as indeed not eaſily to *Miſs?* Suppoſe you had a Friend taken Priſoner by the French, and you ſhould both in Letters to Him, and Converſe with Others, Expreſs, upon all Occaſions, a mighty Sorrow and Concern, and yet would not part with a Penny, nor the leaſt aſſignable Quota towards his Ranſom; Would not every Body ſuſpect the Sincerity of your Concern? I apply it by this Practical Rule, That nothing ſo much Demonſtrates the Sincerity of our Prayers, as the Contributing all we can towards the Obtaining what we Petition for.

IT's certain, that Laws, tho' never ſo good, can't Execute themſelves. All the moſt Poſitive Enacting Clauſes, and the utmoſt Show and Pomp of Authority in Parchment only, can't make Statutes, like Engines, Play of Their own accord.

IT's alſo certain, that good Words won't bear the *Charges of Proſecutions*. The *Reformation* will have but few *Advocates* if it muſt be left to Plead in *Forma Pauperis*.

BUT farther, I am ſo poſſeſs'd of the Truth of what I have ſaid upon theſe Words, that I now Add, The *Reformation* is a Deſign, that if well follow'd, will, I am Perſwaded, leſſen your other Publick Charges more and more; Till we ſhould have no Payments to make in compariſon, but thoſe of Praiſe to God, Thanks to our Queen and Government, and Gratitude to the Worthy Patriots of theſe Societies, whoſe Memories will be Embalmed in Perpetual Honour. Whereas if this Cauſe be Starv'd, through the Covetouſneſs of its Pretended Friends, and the *Mouth of the Wicked ſhould Prevail againſt the Bleſſing*

Blessing of the Righteous; It may be said over our Ruins, that *We Destroyed our Selves on purpose to save Charges.*

6. *YOU see what is likely to be the Effects of giving over this Design, and fainting in it.*

BUT that is so *Threatning*, so *Dreadful* a Thought, that I hardly dare allow my self to make the Supposition. You have been Laying the *Foundation of a Reformed World*, and have Carry'd the Design on to some Height; and not only most Parts of the Kingdom, but many Nations, Kindled by your *Zeal*, and Formed by your *Model*, have gone on so *Vigorously*, as to become an *Example* even to their *Originals*. Oh! Let not all this at last become a *Babel*, for God's sake, Through any *Confusion of Languages*, or want of *Materials*: But let its *Top Reach unto Heaven*; that is, may there never be an End of your Societies, till there shall be no farther need of Them; till that Definitive Sentence is gone forth, that *He that is Filthy shall be Filthy still, and He that is Holy shall be so still.*

THINK what will become of us, if you ſhould ſuffer your ſelves to be Broken and born Down. For if while you Oppoſe your whole Force, and United Strength, Back'd with the Authority of the Nation, it's as much as you can do to make an Honourable Stand, Unleſs a Freſh Spirit Redouble your Vigour, and Enable you to bear up againſt the Impetuous Stream; If the Wicked *Achans*, and Troublers of our *Iſrael*, can find Money, Friends, and Advocates, to Entangle your Proſecutions, and by encreaſing the Charges, render the Law it ſelf a Terrour Even to them that do well; If thoſe Laws that Fence about our Property, and Guard our Peace, are now ſo often violated; If Religion is now Inſulted, and its Name a Jeſt; If Diſſoluteneſs and Debauchery does even now Face the Sun, and ſometimes Brave both Heaven and You at the ſame time; Lord God of Heaven! What would it be, if there were none to Call for Juſtice? If there were none to make the Laws *Heard* and *Felt*, by that due *Execution*, which is their only *Sigm-*

Significancy. The Devil would Return upon us *with ſeven Spirits worſe than the Former.* All future Attempts for a Reforming Society would be Laught out of Countenance, by the Example of your Defeat: And the wide Deſolation of an Overflowing Flood, that had been a long time Swelling upon its Dam, and at length born down all before it, would be but a *Faint Reſemblance* of the Terrours of this Deluge of Iniquity that would come in upon us, which we Tremble to Think of, and Find Impoſſible to Expreſs.

AND therefore, Let none of You *ſo much as ſeem to fall off*, or to deſert ſo Important a Cauſe. For ſome who don't think Themſelves Deſerters, nor would be thought ſo by Others, do yet *Seem to be ſo*, and *that* has a Tendency to make Others really ſo. Deal not, *I beſeech you, and your Brethren of the Society particularly beſeech you*, Not to Deal with Chriſt's *Intereſt* as his Diſciples did by his *Perſon, who Forſook him and Fled*; Except a few, and thoſe that were neareſt him *Fell aſleep*, and ſo let

the Reformation ſhift for it ſelf. Nothing is ſo Diſcouraging and Weakning, nothing Leans ſo much toward a Fatal Diſſolution, as not Keeping Cloſe to Each Other. Obſerving the Times of Meeting, and keeping up that Heart that's Given by Mutual Preſence, Joint Council and Aſſiſtance. Let not the Burden lie upon a few, which would be eaſie when ſhared among a great many. You have no need to Diſcourage one another. You have enough of that from Abroad. *Having ſet your Hand to the Plow, therefore do not look back.* For there are as *many more Reaſons* why you ſhould go on now, than there were for you ever to have *begun*; as the *Miſchiefs* following a Retreat would be *more and greater* than thoſe that firſt awaken'd your Zeal, and brought you into the Field. In all the Wars of the *Romans*, none wore ſo Infamous a Brand as Thoſe that turned their Backs: They were always Mark'd with Infamy, as Flying from the Glory of Victory, or the Honour of a Valiant Death. And therefore thoſe Soldiers that Turn'd

their

their Backs at the Defeat at *Cannæ*, * by *Hannibal*, were by the Decree of the Senate, made Incapable of *Wearing a Crown* or *Garland* for ever after. And could hardly obtain of *Marcellus* ſo much as to be *called Soldiers*. In this caſe the *Roman* and the *Chriſtian* Warfare agree; He that does not Fight *Through*, ſhall never be Crown'd; and he that Turns his Back, ſhall not be own'd for a Soldier: *For if any Man draw back, my Soul ſhall have no Pleaſure in him*, Heb. x. 38.

HERE I might mention the *Excuſes*, *&c.* But I'll rather ſuppoſe they will never be *mentioned more*. For, Pray Gentlemen, may not Theſe that ſtick cloſe to the Cauſe, alledge the ſame things? Have they no *Buſineſs*; or are they Dead to all *Pleaſures*; or could they not find Something to do more Profitable to themſelves, than to attend an *Affair*, which to the Glory of the Undertaking, is not a Penny in their

* Plut. in Vit. Marcelli.

their way? Beſides, if *Self-denial* be an Inſeparable Property of a Chriſtian, I am ſure there can't be a more noble Occaſion. The Combinations of Wicked Men againſt you, don't uſe to *fail each other:* No, they are United cloſe, like *the Scales of the Leviathan; and they laugh at the Sword and the Spear.* The Enemies of Religion are at Unity In that Enmity: *Have one Mind, Rev.* xviii. 3. *And Conſent together with one Conſent,* Pſalm lxxxiii. 5. And that makes your Union and Joint Endeavours the more needful; Otherwiſe you Attack a *Cloſe and Embattled* Enemy, in *Diſtance and Diſorder:* And need I tell you the Effects of that?

TO Conclude: As your Erection into a Society, and Actings upon it, was the Happieſt Omen to the Nation, next to that Revolution that gave you *your Eſtabliſhment,* and reſtored the *Nations;* So your Disbanding and Giving over, would be the moſt *Threatning Preſage* of God's Giving us up as a *People that hate to be Reformed,* and Over whom he might Repeat what was

formerly

formerly the Sentence of an Abandon'd People, *Jerem.* vi. 29. *The Bellows are Burnt, the Lead is Consumed in the Fire, the Founder Melteth in vain, for the Wicked are not plucked away,* (i. e.) They had Defeated all Methods of *Reformation* and *Recovery.* And therefore, *V.* 30. *Reprobate Silver shall Men count them, because the Lord hath Rejected them.*

FINIS.

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